

4. Subbasin Assessment - Summary of Past and Present Pollution Control Efforts

Point Sources

Two discrete point sources exist within the basin. The Homedale and the Marsing WWTPs treat the wastewater from each respective community and the immediate outlying area. Both facilities are federally regulated as part of the NPDES program. As part of the discharge monitoring report portion of their NPDES permits, the WWTPs are required to monitor their effluent to determine compliance with their permit effluent limits. Effluent limits are set to levels at which it has been certified that violations in the state water quality standards will not occur as a result of the effluent. If permit violations occur, the facility is required to notify the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DEQ to find a solution. The monthly discharge monitoring reports are sent to EPA and DEQ and are kept on file at the facility.

In 1996, EPA reissued the Idaho general NPDES permit for confined animal feeding operations. This general permit allows permitted facilities to discharge animal waste only during unusual climatic events. The permit also requires permitted facilities to land apply animal waste at agronomic rates, and requires record keeping of animal waste management practices. It is believed these provisions will reduce discharges to surface waters and reduce impacts to ground water.

The Idaho Department of Agriculture Beef Cattle Animal Feeding Operation (AFO) Program was initiated to bring Idaho into compliance with the Beef Cattle Environmental Act in the shortest possible timeframe. The impetus of the program is to bring an estimated 1,500 Beef Cattle AFOs into compliance with the Beef Cattle Environmental Act. Additionally, the Department of Agriculture will regulate all beef cattle AFOs. In the past, only beef Confined Animal Feeding Operations were regulated.

Nonpoint Sources

In Ada, Owyhee, Canyon, and Elmore Counties, there are existing water quality programs for nonpoint source pollutant reductions. Cooperators may make improvements on their own or seek cost-share funds from one of the many programs available. Most of the agricultural programs are either state or federally funded through the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission (ISCC) or the NRCS. These programs are targeted at the agricultural community to assist with conservation practices. For example, the Owyhee Soil Conservation District (SCD) and the Canyon SCD have Water Quality Program for agriculture money available to address on-the-farm pollutant reductions although Canyon SCD has not yet had any state or federal project areas in the Mid Snake River/Succor Creek watershed. Owyhee SCD had an EQIP Priority Area for Jump Creek. Table 41 shows some of the typical component practices that may serve as stand alone best management practices (BMPs) or be used in combination to address agricultural related pollutants. The appropriate component or combination of components is determined on a site-specific basis. The Water Quality Program for Agriculture is a state of Idaho water quality program that provides cost share incentives to local operators for pollutant reductions. The Ada, Bruneau, Canyon, Elmore, and Owyhee SCDs work with agricultural operators in the respective counties to provide technical assistance to implement BMPs. The agricultural community,

through local conservation districts and other funding sources, has demonstrated a willingness to protect water quality throughout the basin.

Table 41. Typical management components used to address agricultural related pollutants, either stand alone or in combination (not a complete list)

Best Management Practice	Control Effectiveness	Installation Cost	Maintenance Cost
Sediment			
Livestock Exclusion	High	Moderate	Low
Sediment Basins	High	Low	Moderate
Surge Irrigation System	High	High	Moderate
Sprinkler Irrigation System	High	High	Moderate
Filter Strips	Moderate	Low	Low
Polyacrylamide (PAM)	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Bacteria			
Livestock Exclusion	High	Moderate	Low
Waste Management System	High	High	Moderate
Wetland Development	Moderate	High	Moderate
Prescribed Grazing	Moderate	Low	Low
Fencing	Low	Moderate	Low
Nutrients			
Livestock Exclusion	High	Moderate	Low
Nutrient Management	High	Moderate	Low
Filter Strips	Moderate	Low	Low
Irrigation Water Management	Moderate	Low	Low
Fencing	Low	Moderate	Low

Other state and federal funding sources include the state §319 grant program, the Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program, the USDA Environmental Quality Incentive Program, the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, and IDWR agricultural loans. Participation from local operators is voluntary. Other sources of funding include private sources such as Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and colleges and universities.

Reasonable Assurance

The state has responsibility under Sections 401, 402, and 404 of the CWA to provide water quality certification. Under this authority, the state reviews dredge and fill, stream channel alteration, and NPDES permits to ensure that the proposed actions will meet the Idaho's water quality standards.

Under Section 319 of the CWA, each state is required to develop and submit a nonpoint source management plan. Idaho's most recent nonpoint source management plan was

finalized in December 1999. The plan was submitted to and approved by the EPA. Among other things, the plan identifies programs to achieve implementation of nonpoint source BMPs, includes a schedule for program milestones, outlines key agencies and agency roles, identifies available funding sources, and is certified by the state attorney general to ensure that adequate authorities exist to implement the plan.

Idaho's nonpoint source management plan describes many of the voluntary and regulatory approaches the state will take to abate nonpoint pollution sources. One of the prominent programs described in the plan is the provision for public involvement, such as the formation of Basin Advisory Groups (BAGs) and Watershed Advisory Groups (WAGs). The WAGs are to be established in high priority watersheds to assist DEQ and other state agencies in formulating specific actions needed to decrease pollutant loading from point and nonpoint sources that affect water quality limited water bodies. The Mid Snake River/Succor Creek WAG was established in July 2002 and is the designated advisory group for the basin.

The Idaho water quality standards refer to existing authorities to control nonpoint pollution sources in Idaho. Some of these authorities and responsible state agencies are listed in Table 42.

Table 42. State of Idaho's regulatory authority for nonpoint pollution sources.

Authority	IDAPA Citation	Responsible Agency
Rules Governing Solid Waste Management	58.01.02.350.03(b)	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Rules Governing Subsurface and Individual Sewage Disposal Systems	58.01.02.350.03(c)	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Rules and Standards for Stream-channel Alteration	58.01.02.350.03(d)	Idaho Department of Water Resources
Rules Governing Exploration and Surface Mining Operations in Idaho	58.01.02.350.03(e)	Idaho Department of Lands
Rules Governing Placer and Dredge Mining in Idaho	58.01.02.350.03(f)	Idaho Department of Lands
Rules Governing Dairy Waste	58.01.02.350.03(g)	Idaho Department of Agriculture

The state of Idaho uses a voluntary approach to address agricultural nonpoint sources. However, regulatory authority can be found in the water quality standards (IDAPA 58.01.02.350.01 through 58.01.02.350.03). IDAPA 58.01.02.054.07 refers to the Idaho Agricultural Pollution Abatement Plan (Ag Plan), which provides guidance to the agricultural community and includes a list of approved BMPs (IDHW and SCC 1993). A portion of the Ag Plan outlines responsible agencies or elected groups (Soil Conservation Districts) that will take the lead if nonpoint source pollution problems need to be addressed. For agricultural activity, it assigns the local SCDs to assist the landowner/operator with

developing and implementing BMPs to abate nonpoint pollution associated with the land use. If a voluntary approach does not succeed in abating the pollutant problem, the state may seek injunctive relief for those situations that may be determined to be an imminent and substantial danger to public health or the environment (IDAPA 58.01.02.350.02(a)).

The *Idaho Water Quality Standards and Wastewater Treatment Requirements* specify that if water quality monitoring indicates that water quality standards are not being met, even with the use of BMPs or knowledgeable and reasonable practices, the state may request that the designated agency evaluate and/or modify the BMPs to protect beneficial uses (IDAPA 58.01.02.52). If necessary, the state may seek injunctive or other judicial relief against the operator of a nonpoint source activity.

The water quality standards list designated agencies responsible for reviewing and revising nonpoint source BMPs: the Soil Conservation Commission for grazing and agricultural activities, the Department of Transportation for public road construction, Idaho Department of Agriculture for aquaculture, and DEQ for all other activities (IDAPA 58.01.02.003).